

Mr. PENCE. Well, tomorrow the White House will convene a so-called summit on health care reform. It's supposedly an effort to find bipartisan agreement and consensus on reform. And frankly, if the administration and Democrats in Congress were willing to scrap the bill and start over with a clean sheet of paper, I would be all for it.

The American people long for health care reform that will lower the cost of health care insurance without growing the size of government. But that is not what's happening here. Instead of scrapping the bill, the President's actually produced his own bigger, worse version of the bills that passed the House and Senate and then were summarily rejected by the American people: more spending, more taxes, more government, and coverage for abortion.

Instead of starting over, Democrats in Congress continue to threaten to abuse the very rules of this institution by passing some version of their health care reform bill by a simple majority in the Senate—known as reconciliation.

Tomorrow's summit is looking more and more like a taxpayer-funded media event designed to set up passage of ObamaCare 2.0. The American people deserve to know it.

□ 1030

THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. PIERLUISI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, I support health care reform, but I do not support the proposal put forward by the White House, because it mistreats 4.4 million Americans living in Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories. They are treated like second-class citizens.

My loyalty to my party and to our President is beyond question, but my principles and my people come first. This proposal violates my principles, and it mistreats my people.

In Puerto Rico, the Federal Government pays less than 25 percent of the cost of providing Medicaid services. That is a national travesty. The House took important steps to mitigate this disparity in funding. Yet the White House proposal does not make a good-faith effort to address this inequality. Moreover, the proposal excludes Puerto Rico from the exchange but allows non-citizen residents of the States to participate. This is discrimination, and it is no way to treat one's fellow Americans.

I do not believe this proposal reflects the President's thinking, and I cannot believe my colleagues will allow it to stand. The people of Puerto Rico and the other territories fight proudly for their country. Their country should fight for them, too.

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, this administration and Democrats in Congress don't seem to have an answer to the single most important question workers across the country are asking: "Where are the jobs?" The American people don't want more political pandering on the economy and health care; they want action now that will control runaway Federal spending and create jobs.

The third time is not the charm, Mr. President. When government-controlled health care was introduced in the House, the American people rejected it. Strike one. When government-controlled health care was introduced in the Senate, the American people rejected it. Strike two. And when the President puts his government control of health care on the table before a bipartisan handful on Thursday, the American people will reject that, too. Strike three.

The Democrats need to scrap their job-killing policies, like a government takeover of health care and national energy tax, and begin working with Republicans on commonsense solutions to create jobs and reduce out-of-control spending. It's time we work together to get this economy moving again and to help put people back to work.

RECOVERY ACT IS WORKING

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you, here are the jobs. I believe if you polled across America you would understand that the investment that this Democratic Congress made, along with its President, created or saved 3.5 million jobs, gave 95 percent of American workers a tax cut, and began to build our crumbling rail and water and a variety of infrastructure.

Where are the jobs? I will tell you, 2.4 million jobs were created according to the Congressional Budget Office, non-partisan, \$120 billion in tax cuts to 95 percent of our working families and to businesses, loaned nearly \$20 billion to our small businesses creating or saving a job.

What I like most of all is the 300,000 jobs in education and the 400,000 jobs in corrections officers and public health personnel. Let's ask all the firefighters and police officers across America whether or not there were jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that we have invested in America. We had an economy that wasn't growing when we came in, down some 6 percent. Now it's up. We have the jobs, and we are going to do health care reform this morning as well.

We are working for the American people.

ENACT TORT REFORM NOW

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the administration's health care bill fails to include a Republican solution that could actually achieve savings for patients—lawsuit abuse reform.

Forty percent of medical malpractice suits against doctors and hospitals are without merit, according to a study by the Harvard School of Public Health. And excess damages add \$70 billion to \$126 billion annually to health care costs, the Department of Health and Human Services has found. These costs, of course, are passed on to patients.

The administration has only suggested a pilot program for tort reform. But some States, including my home State of Texas, have already enacted tort reform. These States have seen insurance premiums fall and access to medical care expand.

We don't need a pilot program. We need to enact medical malpractice lawsuit abuse reform.

HIGH-SPEED RAIL

(Mrs. HALVORSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. HALVORSON. Where are the jobs? I think we can answer that every time we speak. In my district it is happening quite literally.

Recently I was very proud to announce \$1.2 billion in Recovery Act funding being invested in Illinois for high-speed rail lines from Chicago to St. Louis. Two of the towns in my district happen to be stops along the rail line—Joliet and Normal.

There are those who have said, and continue to say, that projects like these will not put people to work, that the stimulus isn't working. But here is the reality: These high-speed rail lines in Illinois alone are going to put 6,000 people to work. This wouldn't have been possible without the investment in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

I am proud that the Recovery Act is putting these people to work and putting our communities back on the track to recovery. We must continue to invest in American infrastructure, build upon the work of the Recovery Act is doing, and continue working to create jobs. The future of our districts depends on it.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, the President is opening the doors of the White House to host a bipartisan effort on health care reform, and the reason is for hope and optimism. Some think it's the other way around.

It's been a long and tough process, but we always knew that tackling this problem wouldn't be easy. Remember, this has been tried many times over the course of many years. This is the furthest we have reached. Everyone has to have an open mind for this summit. We have to leave divisive partisanship behind. The need is too great. It transcends day-to-day politicking.

Everyone believes we need reform. Everyone recognizes the problems in health care. They are too great to ignore.

Postponing, putting this off, holding it over is just tactics to destroy what we have come forth with. Join us, please, and let's see that we can insure all Americans.

HONORING THE LIFE OF U.S. MARINE SERGEANT JEREMY MCQUEARY

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 18, 2010, Indiana lost one of its brave sons. Marine Sergeant Jeremy McQueary was killed in the Helmand Province, Afghanistan, by an IED while on foot patrol supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant McQueary, a Columbus, Indiana, native, had survived two prior IED attacks while in Afghanistan.

Jeremy, a model Hoosier, enjoyed fishing, four wheeling and giving back to his community by mentoring troubled high school students. He married his high school sweetheart, Rae, and together they had a baby boy, Hadley. He was only a month old when Jeremy shipped out for his third tour, this time to Afghanistan, having already served two previous tours in Iraq.

Eager to join the Marine Corps, Jeremy graduated from high school early and enlisted in 2002. Jeremy's passion for the Corps was so strong that he completed basic training on a broken foot, informing his superiors of his injury only after he had finished basic training. This level of commitment shown by Jeremy to the Corps and our country is an example to us all.

Jeremy McQueary was a devoted father and family man who paid the ultimate sacrifice serving his country. I mourn the loss of Jeremy. I want to thank Jeremy and his family for his service to our country. He and his loved ones are in my prayers.

HIRING ACT

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, America needs jobs, and we need them now. My constituents tell me they want Congress to quit the bickering and partisan posturing and get to working on fixing the economy. Wall Street may be doing well enough for the bankers to reward themselves with big bonuses, but folks on Main Street and on country roads are hurting.

North Carolina's unemployment rate hit its high for 2009 in December, an incredible 11.2 percent. Our top priorities must be: jobs, jobs, jobs. My HIRING Act will provide the incentive for companies to put people to work today, giving employers up to \$7,500 per new worker they hire.

Congress needs to take action on this bill today and put people to work. Passing the HIRING Act would be like CPR for our economy, and I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting that legislation.

RECOGNIZING THE MAPS AIR MUSEUM

(Mr. BOCCIERI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOCCIERI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Military Aviation Preservation Society Air Museum, located in my congressional district at the Akron-Canton Airport. I recently visited this nonprofit museum devoted to preserving our Nation's rich aviation history and the great volunteers who make that museum a reality.

When the Wright Brothers first built their airplane in Ohio, it was an example of American innovation. When U.S. Airborne divisions cleared the way for the Normandy invasion, it was an example of American leadership.

When the Air National Guard recently dispatched to Haiti to help the relief effort, it was an example of American charity. The MAPS Air Museum captures the unique connection between aviation history and our American culture. Our spirit to persevere and succeed parallels our innovative spirit and desire to be leaders in the world and in aviation.

I commend the MAPS Air Museum for its continued inspiration and its dedication to aviation history and the American spirit. Thank you to the soldiers, sailors and airmen who volunteer there every day to keep our history alive.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4626, HEALTH INSURANCE INDUSTRY FAIR COMPETITION ACT

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1098 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1098

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in

the House the bill (H.R. 4626) to restore the application of the Federal antitrust laws to the business of health insurance to protect competition and consumers. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) two hours of debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DRIEHAUS). The gentlewoman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I am pleased to yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from North Carolina, Dr. FOXX. All time yielded during consideration of this rule is for debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous materials into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New York?

There was no objection.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, like all of my colleagues, I have spent a lot of time talking with people in my district about health care and what is happening to them. They were in no way prepared for the influx of incredible rate increases that seemed to come out of nowhere and fall like rain upon them, to the extent that most of them really are not sure they can even stay insured.

Invariably, the conversation turns to health premium increases. I hear about insurers that deny coverage. I heard from a father who had just had a child who was born with a condition that would make him uninsurable for the rest of his life. I listened to someone tell me that her husband's new insurance policy won't cover her because she has preexisting conditions or simply because it doesn't cover her.

But now this Congress is on the brink of some commonsense changes to the health insurance industry that will help to level the playing field a bit between ordinary Americans and the giant corporations that exert such power over our day-to-day lives.

□ 1045

And I say "our" because I personally am caught in the same trap as most of my constituents. I don't have any kind of special coverage because I'm a Member of Congress. I have always been on my husband's policy at home from Eastman Kodak that has covered us since he retired, but it no longer will cover spouses. We are halfway through dropping spouses, and all the benefits that we got as spouses were taken away about 4 years ago. So it's not the worst plan, but it's not the best either.